

Calendar No. 933

68TH CONGRESS }
2d Session }

SENATE

{ REPORT
{ No. 867

QUARTERLY MONEY-ORDER ACCOUNTS TO BE RENDERED BY DISTRICT POSTMASTERS

JANUARY 15, 1925.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. STERLING, from the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 4441]

The Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, having had under consideration the bill (H. R. 4441) to provide for quarterly instead of monthly money-order accounts to be rendered by postmasters at third and fourth class post offices, reports the same back to the Senate with amendments and, as so amended, recommends that the bill do pass.

The amendments recommended are as follows:

On page 1, strike out lines 3 to 6, inclusive, and insert the following:

That section 4044 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is amended to read as follows:

On page 1, line 8, after "render," insert "to the Comptroller, Bureau of Accounts, Post Office Department."

Amend the title so as to read:

An act to amend section 4044 of the Revised Statutes, as amended.

The purpose of amendment No. 1 is to clarify the bill from a technical standpoint. As the bill passed the House the act of January 27, 1894, an act of 13 sections, is literally amended so as to be only the one section proposed in the bill. As a matter of fact, the provisions which are intended to be amended are found only in section 8 of the act of January 27, 1894, which in turn is an amendment to section 4044 of the Revised Statutes. It would seem that the desirable way to accomplish the purpose intended is by amending section 4044 of the Revised Statutes, as amended. This is done in the amendment.

Amendment No. 2 is in conformity with the present law and practice and avoids having the law silent on the question as to whom the accounts are rendered. Section 4044 of the Revised Statutes now

provides that the accounts shall be rendered to the Auditor for the Post Office Department. In accordance with the budget and accounting act, 1921, the powers and duties theretofore performed by the Auditor for the Post Office Department with respect to administrative examination of accounts of the Postal Service are thereafter to be performed by the Comptroller, Bureau of Accounts, Post Office Department, and it is to this officer that the accounts are now rendered.

Amendment No. 3. While the title expresses the purpose of the bill, it is somewhat confusing inasmuch as section 4044 of the Revised Statutes, as amended, is not confined to postmasters at third and fourth class post offices but applies generally to postmasters at all post offices authorized to issue money orders. The omission from the title of any reference to a particular class of postmasters will avoid confusion and misconstruction on this point.

The purpose of this legislation is fully explained in letters from the Postmaster General to the chairmen of the House and Senate Committees, as follows:

OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, D. C., January 12, 1924.

Hon. W. W. GRIEST,
*Chairman Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads,
House of Representatives.*

MY DEAR MR. GRIEST: I have received your letter of January 8, 1924, referring a bill (H. R. 4441) to provide for quarterly instead of monthly money-order accounts to be rendered by district postmasters at third and fourth class post offices for consideration and recommendation.

The bill as drawn will permit the department to discontinue the rendition of monthly money-order accounts by the smaller post offices whose transactions are not sufficient in volume to make it advantageous to obtain an accounting more frequently than once a quarter.

Commencing July 1, 1922, a change was made in the method of accounting by third and fourth class postmasters, extending to their money-order accounts the principles of the central accounting system which already applied to their postal accounts.

Under this system all postal receipts and money-order funds from whatever source are interchangeable and available for the payment of money orders and all authorized post-office expenses, thereby enabling these offices to finance themselves from local post-office receipts. Money orders paid at district offices are treated as cash and are remitted to the central accounting office, which gives credit for them as a deposit of surplus funds or as applying to the purchase of needed stamp stock.

The paid orders are taken up in the money-order account of the central office and forwarded daily to the department and are at once put in course of audit; whereas, under the former system, the paid orders were retained in the post office until the close of the month in which paid, performing no function other than an inert evidence of credit.

The district postmasters prepare and forward to their respective central accounting postmasters, of which there are 59, consolidated quarterly accounts showing all items of receipts and payments, both postal and money order, and these accounts contain all necessary information and are amply sufficient for all accounting purposes and for the protection of the revenues.

A monthly statement is still rendered by the district postmasters in order to comply with the present law, but these monthly statements furnish no information which can not be more conveniently obtained from the quarterly account and are unnecessary and costly duplications of the other records.

It is accordingly believed that a considerable saving would result from the discontinuance of the monthly report and the contemplated legislation is recommended.

Very truly yours,

HARRY S. NEW,
Postmaster General.

OFFICE OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, D. C., April 14, 1924.

Hon. THOMAS STERLING,
*Chairman Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads,
United States Senate.*

MY DEAR SENATOR STERLING: On March 19, 1924, there was referred to your committee a bill, H. R. 4441, to provide for quarterly money-order accounts to be rendered by district postmasters at third and fourth class post offices, and I am writing to recommend it for early and favorable consideration.

The effect of this bill will be to permit the discontinuance of more than 570,000 reports every year from the smaller offices, which must now be required in literal compliance with the law, but which serve no practical purpose.

A more complete explanation of the accounting methods in use in these offices and of the advantages of the bill may be found on pages 66 and 67 of my annual report for the fiscal year 1923 and in the report of the House committee on the bill (Rept. No. 187).

In view of the economy to be effected by the bill I should appreciate anything which may consistently be done to expedite its passage.

Very truly yours,

HARRY S. NEW,
Postmaster General.

○

THE STATE OF NEW YORK
IN SENATE
January 12, 1921.
REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION
PASSED BY THE SENATE
MAY 1, 1919.
ALBANY:
J. B. LEECH, STATE PRINTER.
1921.